



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP TARGETS PORTSMOUTH SALT MARSH FOR NEXT MAJOR RESTORATION PROJECT

PORTSMOUTH, RI – With the formal groundbreaking of the Lonsdale Marsh Restoration Project planned for September 10, the Rhode Island Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership (RI-CWRP) is seeking \$100,000 in donations for its next major project – the restoration of a 40-acre salt marsh in Portsmouth. The marsh, known as Town Pond, was damaged by fill during the dredging of the Mount Hope Bay shipping channel in the 1940's. Planning and design of the restoration, which would restore water flow and native coastal vegetation to this former salt pond, are nearly complete. However, local funds, which will be matched more than 20-to-1 by federal and state habitat restoration funds administered through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, are required for the project to advance to construction. The site, if restored, would provide critical habitat for marine fish, shellfish, birds, and other wildlife.

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"This is an opportunity to undo past environmental damages and advance the revitalization of Mount Hope and Narragansett Bays," said Richard Kleiman, chairman of the RI-CWRP Advisory Board and vice president of ESS Group, Inc. of East Providence, one of the lead corporate partners in the RI-CWRP. "Meeting the donation goal would allow this restoration project to go to construction almost immediately, providing an excellent return on corporate investment to the environment."

The RI-CWRP, a public-private partnership formed to restore Rhode Island wetlands, was launched in October 2001 by Senator Lincoln Chafee (R-RI) together with industry executives, environmental officials, municipalities, and non-profit environmental groups. Corporate dollars raised at the state level provide local match that is used to leverage federal funds. "The CWRP is a great concept," explains Bill Hubbard of the USACE and Coastal America. "Often states cannot access federal funds because they do not have the money required to meet the local match specifications of a particular grant program. When corporations step in, this need is met and important projects like Town Pond can proceed." To date, the RI-CWRP has raised \$130,000, including in-kind services, that has resulted in the investment of more than \$2.6 million in federal matching funds to the Ocean State. RI-CWRP projects are currently underway in Barrington, Lincoln, and Pawtucket to restore coastal wetlands, fish passage over dams, and eelgrass beds. These projects will restore more than 37 acres of wetlands and 7 miles of riverine habitat.

ESS Group, Inc. and Narragansett Electric Company are lead corporate sponsors of RI-CWRP. Arch Chemicals, Inc., Battelle, EA Engineering, and Applied Science Associates have signed on as charter members of the Partnership. Corporations can donate through a simple partnership agreement expressing the type and amount of the donation. Contact Rich Kleiman at (781) 489-1133 for details and see more information online at <http://www.CWRP.org>.

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